



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 1350.0 - Australian Economic Indicators, 1995

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 05/05/1995

### Feature Article - Renters in Australia

#### An extract from *Renters in Australia*, (cat. no. 4138.0)

This article consists of three chapters from the ABS publication, *Renters in Australia*, (cat. no. 4138.0). This publication examines the demographic and financial characteristics of people living in rental dwellings in Australia. It also provides an indication of their housing history and the characteristics of the dwellings they currently occupy. The first chapter of the article presents an overview of Australia's population classified by nature of occupancy, that is, owners and purchasers of dwellings as well as renters. These data provide a backdrop for the two chapters shown here which deal solely with renters, boarders and those who live rent-free. The other chapters in the publication (cat. no. 4138.0) relate to characteristics of renters, characteristics of rental dwellings, and the costs of renting and affordability. Data presented relate to the adult population of Australia that live in private dwellings.

#### AN OVERVIEW OF OWNERS AND RENTERS

This chapter assesses nature of occupancy for the following three levels of adult population:

- persons (13.5 million);
- income units (8.4 million); and
- households (6.5 million).

Subsequent chapters concentrate on income units and households who are rental tenants.

The reason for presenting housing statistics at three different levels of population is to assist the analysis of detailed characteristics. For example, data for all persons will highlight demographic and employment characteristics, income unit tables will present data on housing costs and affordability measures, while information on households will focus on characteristics associated with the dwelling.

#### Sex and age

In April 1994, 61 per cent of Australia's adult population either owned or were purchasing their home, while 25 per cent (3,400,100 persons) were renters or boarders. A further 14 per cent of people lived rent-free.

Generally, there were consistent proportions of males and females in each of the occupancy types. There was a slightly higher proportion of females in the owner/purchaser category (52 per cent), and a slightly higher proportion of males in the rent-free category (53 per cent). For the category renters/boarders, the proportions for males and females were equal.

Renters/boarders tend to be concentrated in the younger age ranges. More than half of all

renters were aged between 20-34 years and the median age group for renters was in the 30-34 age group. In contrast, 47 per cent of all owners and purchasers were aged between 30-49 years with the median being in the age group 45-49 years. Nearly 20 per cent of all owners and purchasers were aged 65 or more compared with only seven per cent of renters/boarders. Those in the rent-free category also tended to be younger, with 75 per cent aged 15-24 years. A significant proportion of these would be children living in the family home.

### State and Territory distributions

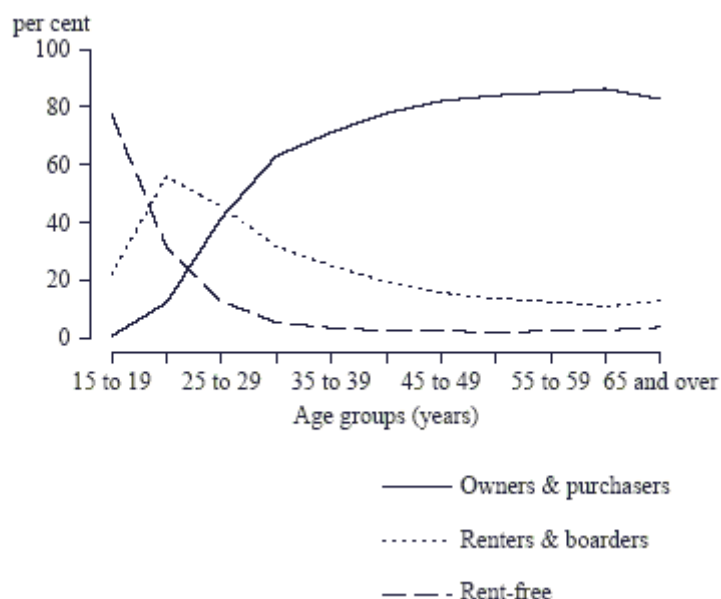
The majority of people in all States and Territories, with the exception of the Northern Territory, were owners/purchasers. Overall, owners/purchasers accounted for 61 per cent of the Australian population. This proportion varied from a high of 65 per cent in Tasmania to a low of 44 per cent for persons resident in the Northern Territory.

The Northern Territory was the only State or Territory with a greater proportion of renters/boarders than owners/purchasers (45 per cent renters/boarders, 44 per cent owners/purchasers).

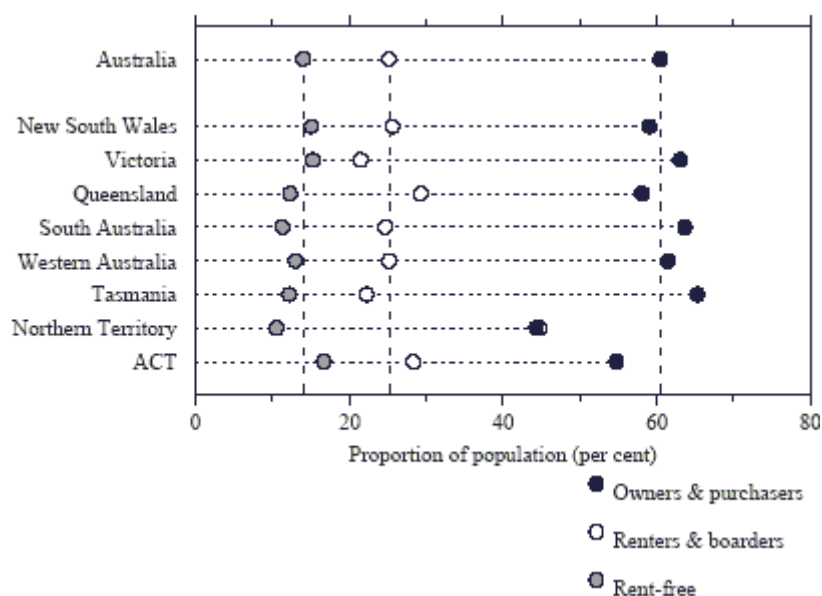
The State with the next highest proportion of renters/boarders was Queensland (29 per cent). The lowest proportions of renters/boarders occurred in Victoria and Tasmania (each 22 per cent).

The highest proportions of persons living rent-free were in the Australian Capital Territory (17 per cent) and New South Wales and Victoria (each 15 per cent), while the lowest proportions were in the Northern Territory and South Australia (each 11 per cent).

**GRAPH 1 PROPORTION OF PERSONS BY NATURE OF OCCUPANCY AND AGE**



**GRAPH 2 PERSONS AGED 15 YEARS OR OVER BY NATURE OF OCCUPANCY BY STATE OR TERRITORY**



## Labour force status

The proportions of owners, purchasers, renters and boarders employed full-time were about the same as the national average (see Table 1.1). In Australia, 43 per cent of persons were employed full-time in April 1994. Fourteen per cent of the total population were employed part-time, six per cent were unemployed and the remaining 36 per cent were not in the labour force

Unemployed persons were less likely to be owners/purchasers and more likely to be renters/boarders. Unemployed persons accounted for only three per cent of owners/purchasers but made up 12 per cent of renters/boarders. Nearly half (47 per cent) of all unemployed persons in April 1994 were renting or boarding, almost double the proportion of all persons (25 per cent) who rent or board.

Proportionally fewer renters/boarders were not in the labour force than was the case for persons in other occupancy types. Only 30 per cent of renters/boarders were not in the labour force, compared with 38 per cent of owners/purchasers and 39 per cent of those living rent-free.

These data reflect the findings discussed above on the age of renters and owners/purchasers. In general, owners were older and more likely to be retired (and hence not in the labour force) than renters.

Similarly, those living rent-free were more likely to be younger and perhaps attending an educational institution and hence less likely to be employed full-time.

**TABLE 1 PERSONS: LABOUR FORCE STATUS BY NATURE OF OCCUPANCY**

Labour force status	Nature of occupancy				Total
	Owners/purchasers	Renters/boarders	Rent-free	Other	
	Percent				
Employed - full-time	45.4	46.4	27.7	46.5	43.1
Employed - part-time	13.3	12	22.4	*7.1	14.2
Unemployed	3	12	11.2	*9.5	6.4
Not in the labour force	38.1	29.5	38.5	36.7	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

'000

all persons	8,154.8	3,400.1	1,892.4	17.4	13,464.8
-------------	---------	---------	---------	------	----------

\* Relative standard error of 25 per cent or more.

## Birthplace

In April 1994, persons born outside Australia were more likely to own or be purchasing their dwelling than those born in Australia. Sixty-six per cent of the 3,574,200 persons born overseas owned or were purchasing their home compared with 59 per cent of the 9,890,600 persons born in Australia. Similar proportions of Australian born and overseas born persons were renters or boarders (25 per cent). Sixteen per cent of Australian born persons lived in rent-free accommodation, well above the eight per cent of the overseas born population.

**TABLE 2 PERSONS: COUNTRY OF BIRTH BY NATURE OF OCCUPANCY**

Country of birth	Nature of occupancy			Total(a)	All persons
	Owners/purchasers	Renters/boarders	Rent-free		
	Percent				000
Oceania and Antarctica (excluding Australia)	48	43	8.8	100.0	284.7
New Zealand	50.6	41.2	7.9	100.0	222.3
Fiji	37.4	44.4	18.1	100.0	27.9
Other Oceania and Antarctica	39.4	53.8	6.8	100.0	34.6
Europe and the former USSR	76.2	18.8	4.8	100.0	2,249.2
United Kingdom of Ireland	71.2	24.4	4.1	100.0	1,133.0
Germany	77.6	16.5	5.8	100.0	110
Greece	84.9	7.0	7.9	100.0	132.2
Italy	91.3	4.7	3.8	100.0	262
Other Europe and the former USSR	76.9	17.3	5.8	100.0	611.8
Middle East and North Africa	55.9	32.3	11.7	100.0	178.8
Lebanon	52.4	34.7	12.8	100.0	77.7
Turkey	51.2	37.6	11	100.0	28.7
Other Middle East and North Africa	61.5	27.6	10.9	100.0	72.3
South East Asia	44.3	35.7	19.7	100.0	352.8
Indonesia	48.2	33.1	18.5	100.0	33.1
Philippines	42.7	42.1	15	100.0	66.3
Viet Nam	36	39.5	24.1	100.0	140
Other South East Asia	54.5	28	17.5	100.0	113.4
North East Asia	44.6	42	13.3	100.0	161.5
China (excluding Taiwan Province)	40.1	49.5	10.2	100.0	78.8
Hong Kong	51.8	35.3	12.8	100.0	47.8
Other North East Asia	44.8	34.1	21.1	100.0	34.9
Southern Asia	5.31	34.2	12.6	100.0	130.5
India	59.5	31.9	8.4	100.0	67.1
Sri Lanka	49.8	33	17	100.0	46.3
Other Southern Asia	37	46.1	17	100.0	17
Northern Africa	51.5	33.7	13.4	100.0	60.8
Canada	56.7	27.2	14.5	100.0	24.4
United States of America	47.8	38.3	12.8	100.0	35.9
Other Northern America	73.9	26.4	0.3	100.0	0.3

South America, Central America and the Caribbean	48.9	32.7	18.3	100.0	66.7
Chile	43.9	37.7	18.3	100.0	18.6
Other South America, Central America and the Caribbean	50.9	30.8	18.3	100.0	48.1
Africa (Excluding North Africa)	59.7	27	13.2	100.0	88.7
South Africa	60.3	23.6	16	100.0	39.4
Other Africa (Excluding North Africa)	59.3	29.7	11	100.0	49.3
<b>All overseas born persons</b>	<b>66.1</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,574.2</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>9,890.6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>60.5</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13,464.8</b>

(a) Includes a small proportion of persons who have some other nature of occupancy.

Persons born in Europe were more likely to be owners or purchasers than those born elsewhere (76 per cent). This group was dominated by the sizeable population who were born in the United Kingdom and Ireland, of whom 71 per cent owned or were purchasing their own home. Persons born in Italy (91 per cent) and Greece (85 per cent) also had particularly high home ownership rates and hence very low proportions who rented. These proportions reflect the older age structure of European born migrants. In general, persons born in Asia who tend to be younger have lower rates of home ownership and higher rates of renting than Australian born or the average for all overseas born persons. This is also likely to be influenced by the fact that, in general, Asian born persons arrived in Australia much more recently than persons born in Europe.

The relationship between nature of occupancy and year of arrival for those born outside Australia is presented in Table 1.3. As expected, persons who had arrived in Australia more recently were much less likely to own or be purchasing their own home. Sixty-five per cent of those who arrived in Australia since 1991 were renting in April 1994, compared with only 15 per cent of those who arrived in Australia before 1971.

**TABLE 3 PERSONS BORN OVERSEAS: YEAR OF ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA BY NATURE OF OCCUPANCY**

Year of arrival in Australia	Nature of occupancy			Total(a)	Number of persons
	Owners/purchasers	Renters/boarders	Rent-free		
		percent			'000
Before 1971	81.4	15.3	3.1	100	1,877.7
1971 to 1975	68.6	23.5	7.7	100	387.4
1976 to 1980	58.8	26.9	14.1	100	298.1
1981 to 1985	55.2	27.9	16.6	100	342.7
1986 to 1990	44.5	40.5	14.7	100	498.5
1991 to 1994(b)	19.1	65.1	15.4	100	267.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.1</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,574.2</b>

## Income units

There were 8,402,700 income units in Australia in April 1994. Of these, 57 per cent owned or

were purchasing their home, 32 per cent were renters or boarders and 11 per cent lived rent-free. These proportions are a little different from those provided earlier which showed that 61 per cent of persons were owners or purchasers, 25 per cent were renters or boarders and 14 per cent lived rent-free. The main reason for the difference is that a much higher proportion of income units which contained two adults were likely to be owners or purchasers than they were to be renting. Conversely, a higher proportion of single adult income units (including single parents with dependent children) were likely to be renting.

Over half of all renters and nearly all boarders were one person income units compared to only one quarter of owners and purchasers. Conversely, 70 per cent of owners and purchasers were couple income units. More than half of all one parent income units rented their accommodation in April 1994.

**TABLE 4 INCOME UNITS: INCOME UNIT TYPE BY NATURE OF OCCUPANCY**

Income unit type	Nature of occupancy				Total(a)	All income units '000
	Owners/ purchasers	Renters percent	Boarders	Rent-free		
Couple only	83.3	14.3	0.4	1.8	100.0	2,109.4
Couple with dependants	79.5	18.3	0.4	1.6	100.0	2,034.6
One parent	38.4	51.4	5.1	4.7	100.0	458.2
One person	32.7	26.6	18.3	22	100.0	3,800.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,402.7</b>

(a) Includes a small proportion of persons who have some other nature of occupancy.

## Household type

Owners and purchasers accounted for 73 per cent of the 6,468,800 households in Australia in April 1994. Renters made up 25 per cent, rent-free one per cent and other types of occupancy less than one per cent. Again, these proportions are slightly different from those presented earlier for persons and income units. The main difference is the very low proportion of rent-free and no boarder households. Most of the persons and income units boarding or living rent-free do so as part of a wider household as opposed to being a household in their own right.

One parent and one person households were much more likely than couple households to be renting. Renters accounted for 46 per cent of one parent households, 35 per cent of one person households but only 16 per cent of all couple households.

**TABLE 5 HOUSEHOLDS: HOUSEHOLD TYPE BY NATURE OF OCCUPANCY**

Household type	Nature of occupancy			Total(a)	All households '000
	Owners/ purchasers	Renters percent	Rent-free		
Couple only	83	15.9	0.9	100.0	1,565.6
Couple with dependants	82.7	16.3	0.8	100.0	2,386.7
One parent	53.2	45.5	1	100.0	543.1
One person	62.9	34.5	2.3	100.0	1,309.2
Other	51.6	46.4	1.8	100.0	664
<b>Total</b>	<b>73.1</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,468.8</b>

(a) Includes a small proportion of persons who have some other nature of occupancy.

## Type of dwelling by nature of occupancy

For all household types, and all nature of occupancy types, the most common type of dwelling was a separate house (80 per cent of all households in Australia).

Over 90 per cent of all owner and purchaser households lived in separate houses compared with only 50 per cent of renting households.

There were greater proportions of renting households than owner/purchaser households living in semi-detached, row or terrace houses, or townhouses. Renting households accounted for 53 per cent of all households in semi-detached, row or terrace houses, or townhouses. Renting households also occupied a greater number of flats, units or apartments. They accounted for 72 per cent of all households occupying some type of flat, unit or apartment.

**TABLE 6 HOUSEHOLDS: TYPE OF DWELLING BY NATURE OF OCCUPANCY**

Type of dwelling	Nature of occupancy			Total(a)
	Owners/ purchasers	Renters	Rent-free	
		percent		
Separate house	90.5	50.4	76.3	80.1
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse	4.6	15.3	7.8	7.3
Flat, unit or apartment	4.2	33.4	13.8	11.8
Other	0.5	0.8	*1.9	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
		'000		
All households	4,730.5	1,647.6	81.9	6,468.8

(a) Includes a small proportion of persons who have some other nature of occupancy.

\* Relative standard error of 25 per cent or more.

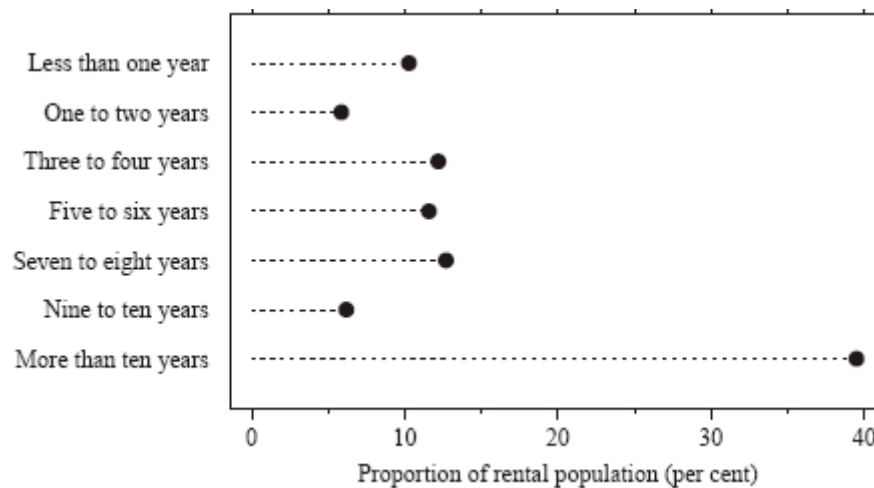
## RENTAL HISTORY

This chapter looks at the rental history of current rental tenants. Data are presented on the age of people when they first became a rental tenant, the number of years in rented accommodation and the frequency of moving house. As with the previous chapter, non-dependant children living with their parents have been excluded from the analysis and the tables.

### Number of years in rented dwellings

Nearly 40 per cent of all renters, boarders and rent-free income units had lived in rental accommodation for more than 10 years. A further 10 per cent had been renting for less than a year at the time of the survey.

**GRAPH 3 PROPORTION OF INCOME UNITS RENTING THEIR HOME  
BY NUMBER OF YEARS INCOME UNIT REFERENCE PERSON HAS BEEN  
IN RENTAL DWELLINGS**



## Long term renters

Households comprising one parent and one person income units were more likely to have been long term renters (those renting for more than 10 years) than other types of households. Fifty-six per cent of each of these groups had been in rental accommodation for more than 10 years. Just on half of all couples with dependants who rent were long term renters, while for couples without dependants, the proportion was 43 per cent. On the other hand, less than one quarter of other households were long term renters. This category includes group households who tend to be much younger than other renters.

Twenty-nine per cent of all long term renters were persons who lived alone. A high proportion of this group would be older persons. The distribution of renters by the type of dwelling differed very little according to the number of years they had lived in rented dwellings. Fifty-six per cent of all long term renters lived in a separate house, 29 per cent in a flat, unit or apartment, while 14 per cent rented a semi-detached, row or terrace house, or townhouse.

Thirty per cent of all long term renters rented their dwelling from a State or Territory housing authority, 29 per cent through a real estate agent and 24 per cent privately from someone who does not live in the same household. However, over three quarters of all State or Territory housing authority tenants were long term renters. This is well above the 32 per cent of those whose landlord was a real estate agent and 40 per cent of private renters.

**TABLE 7 INCOME UNITS(a): HOUSEHOLD TYPE BY NUMBER OF YEARS REFERENCE PERSON HAS LIVED IN RENTED DWELLINGS**

Household type	Years in rented dwellings							Total(c)	No. of income units(c)
	Less than 1	1 to 2	3 to 4	5 to 7	8 to 10	More than 10	Not stated(b)		
			percent						'000
Couple only	11.5	12.2	12.2	11.6	7.7	43.4	*-	100.0	263
Couple with dependants	5.7	10.2	11.3	14.4	7.1	49.9	*0.2	100.0	406.9
One parent	3.8	7.8	9.3	13.3	8.0	55.9	*1.0	100.0	255.5
One person	7	8.5	8.5	11.2	6.4	56.3	*-	100.0	482.1
Other(d)	15.1	15.9	13.5	12.8	4.7	21.3	14	100.0	967
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>39.5</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,374.5</b>

(a) Includes renter and boarder income units and excludes non-dependant children living with their parents.

(b) Includes income units which were excluded from this question.

(c) Includes small proportion who did not know the number of years in rented dwellings.



(d) Includes group households and other multi family households.

\* Relative standard error of 25 per cent or more.

**TABLE 8 INCOME UNITS(a): NUMBER OF YEARS REFERENCE PERSON HAS LIVED IN RENTED DWELLINGS BY TYPE OF DWELLING**

Years in rented dwellings	Type of dwelling				Total	No. of income units
	Separate house	Semi-detached/ row or terrace house/ townhouse	Flat/unit/ apartment	Other		
			per cent			'000
Less than 1 year	52.2	13.8	32.6	*1.4	100.0	244.7
1 to 2	51	15.2	32.9	*0.9	100.0	289.4
3 to 4	53.1	13.4	32.7	*0.9	100.0	274.7
5 to 7	53.9	14.4	30.7	*1.0	100.0	302.5
8 to 10	57	14.9	27.3	*0.8	100.0	146.5
More than 10 years	56.4	14.1	28.8	0.7	100.0	938.5
Not stated(b)	90.2	5.3	4.3	*0.2	100.0	139.7
<b>Total(c)</b>	<b>56.9</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,374.5</b>

(a) Includes renter and boarder income units and excludes non-dependant children living with their parents.

(b) Includes income units which were excluded from this question.

(c) Includes a small proportion who did not know the number of years in rented dwellings.

\* Relative standard error of 25 per cent or more.

### Number of times moved in last five years

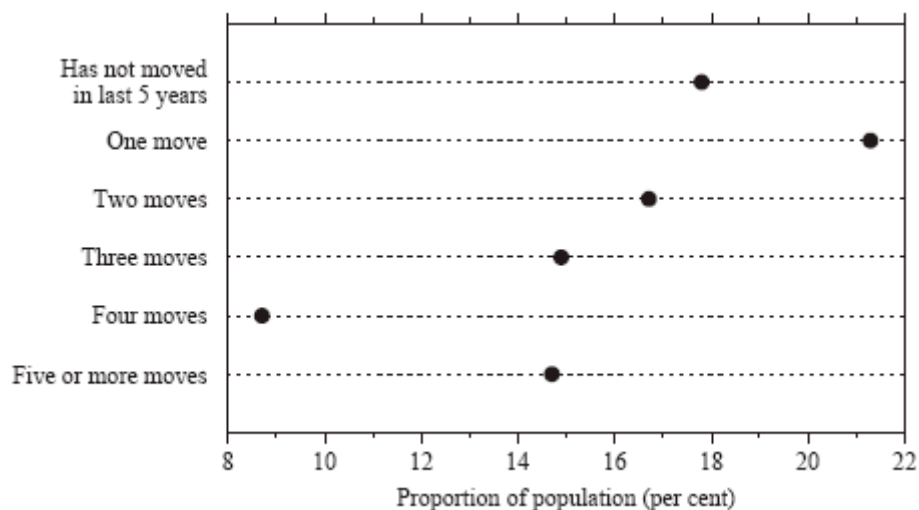
Over 80 per cent of renter income units had moved dwelling within the last five years. Of these 21 per cent had moved once, 17 per cent twice, 15 per cent three times, while there were 15 per cent of renters who had moved five times or more in the last five years.

As could be expected, younger renters were much more likely to have moved dwellings than older renters. Of renter income units who hadn't moved in the past five years, 35 per cent had a reference person aged 65 years and over. Only six per cent of this group had a reference person younger than 30 years. Of those renter income units who had moved frequently in the last five years (5 or more times), over 60 per cent had a reference person aged less than 30 years. About one third of renter income units with a reference person aged 15 to 19 years had moved once in the past five years, with a further 20 per cent having moved twice. One quarter of all renting income units with a reference person aged between 20 and 29 years, had moved five or more times within the last five years.

Persons living alone were less likely to have moved than other household types. Thirty per cent of single persons renting had not moved in the last five years. As noted earlier, these persons are likely to include a high proportion of older renters. For sole parent renters, 23 per cent had not moved, while over 15 per cent had moved five or more times.

The most mobile group in the population were income units in other households i.e. group and other multi family households, with only nine per cent not having moved in the last five years. This category included young unrelated people renting together who are at a more mobile stage of their life cycle.

### GRAPH 4 PROPORTION OF INCOME UNITS BY NUMBER OF TIMES REFERENCE PERSON HAS MOVED IN THE FIVE YEARS TO APRIL 1994



**TABLE 9 INCOME UNITS(a): HOUSEHOLD TYPE BY NUMBER OF TIMES REFERENCE PERSON HAS MOVED IN THE FIVE YEARS TO APRIL 1994**

Household type	Number of times moved in last 5 years						Not stated(b)	Total	No. of income units
	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more			
	per cent								000
Couple only	20.1	25.7	17.9	15.4	7.7	12.9	*-	100	263
Couple with dependants	18	21.7	19.4	18.4	9.6	12.2	*0.2	100	406.9
One parent	23.2	19.8	17.5	14.4	8.2	15.4	*1.0	100	255.5
One person	30.1	23.3	15.1	12	6.5	12.6	*-	100	482.1
Other	9.2	19.3	15.6	14.8	9.6	17	14	100	967
Total	17.7	21.3	16.6	14.9	8.6	14.7	5.8	100	2,374.5

(a) Includes renter and boarder income units and excludes non-dependant children living with their parents.

(b) Includes a small proportion of income units who were not asked the number of times moved in the past five years.

\* Relative standard error of 25 per cent or more.

## DEMAND FOR PUBLIC HOUSING

This chapter provides an assessment of the demand for rental housing provided by Governments, notably State and Territory housing authorities. Two broad measures are covered - those currently renting public housing and those stating that they are currently registered on public housing authority waiting lists. Care needs to be taken when comparing the estimates of those who state that they are on waiting lists with administrative data maintained by public housing authorities. Firstly, the data presented in this chapter relates to income units and, in some instances, it may be possible for two individuals from the same income unit to be registered separately on public housing waiting lists or for the income unit to be registered twice. On the other hand, while respondents may report that they are on a public housing waiting list, they may be ineligible and thus not officially recognised by the relevant authority. In addition, this survey only covered renters. There may be some income units currently living in their own home who are also on public housing waiting lists.

The survey data showed there were 375,600 income units renting from a State or Territory housing authority in April 1994. This was 10 per cent of all renting income units. If the 933,400 income units who live rent-free and the 736,900 income units who rent from a person living in the same household are excluded, the proportion of those who rent public housing increases to 20 per cent.

## Public renters

Table 10 provides a summary of the 375,600 income units renting from a State or Territory housing authority.

In general, tenants of public housing authority rental dwellings were likely to live alone, have low income and rely on Government pensions or benefits for that income.

Over one quarter (28 per cent) of public housing tenants were aged 65 years or older while a further 28 per cent were aged between 45 and 64 years. Nearly half (45 per cent) of all public tenants were one person income units, while a relatively high proportion (compared to other types of rental tenants) were one parent income units (23 per cent).

Nearly two thirds of those renting from State or Territory housing authorities were in the lowest two income quintiles (with income below \$289 per week). Only 19 per cent of tenants had their main source of income from wages or salaries, while nearly all the others relied on Government pensions or benefits for their income.

**TABLE 10 INCOME UNITS(a): SUMMARY CHARACTERISTICS**

Summary characteristics	Proportion of total (%)
Age group of reference person	
15 to 24 years	6.2
25 to 34 years	19.7
35 to 44 years	18.7
45 to 54 years	15.5
55 to 64 years	12.4
65 years and over	27.5
Type of income unit	
Couple only	13.8
Couple with dependants	18.4
One parent	22.8
One person	45
Gross weekly income quintiles	
Less than \$178	25.9
\$178 to \$288	35.9
\$289 to \$415	18.5
\$416 to \$592	11.9
More than \$592	7.8
Main source of income	
Wage or salary	19.2
Government pension or benefit	78.2
Other	2.5
Gross weekly rent paid	
Less than \$50	47.9
\$50 to \$99	38.6
\$100 or more	12.5
Type of dwelling rented	
Separate house	49.7
Semi-detached/row or terrace house/townhouse	19.7
Flat/unit/apartment	30.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Median proportion of income paid in rent (%)	21
Number of income units ('000)	375.6

(a) Includes income units who were renting from a State or Territory housing authority in April 1994.

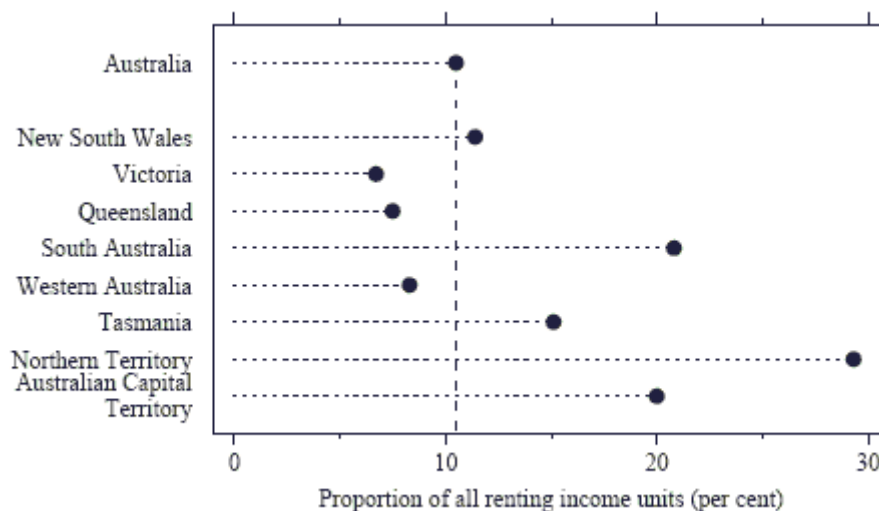
Nearly half of all public rental dwellings were separate houses in April 1994, see table 3.1. Of the other half, 31 per cent were flats, units or apartments, while the remaining 20 per cent were semi-

detached, row or terrace houses or, townhouses. Nearly half (48 per cent) of public housing renters paid less than \$50 per week in rent. On average, income units renting from a State or Territory housing authority paid 21 per cent of their weekly income in rent.

### State and Territory differences

Across Australia, 10 per cent of all renting income units, rented from a State or Territory housing authority. In the Northern Territory, this proportion was 29 per cent, while in South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, it was 21 and 20 per cent respectively. Victoria and Queensland had the lowest proportion of public renters with seven and eight per cent respectively.

**GRAPH 5 PROPORTION OF INCOME UNITS RENTING FROM A PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY BY STATE OR TERRITORY**



### Housing authorities as only landlord type

Of the 375,600 income units renting from a State or Territory housing authority in April 1994, 100,200 (or 27 per cent) stated that they had always rented from a public housing authority.

Consistent with all current public housing tenants, those who claim to have always rented from a public housing authority were likely to be older, low income, one person income units. Over one third were aged 65 years or more and over half were 55 years or older, while 57 per cent were one person income units. Over two thirds (70 per cent) of these long term public tenants had gross weekly income in the lowest two income quintiles.

### State and Territory waiting lists

In April 1994, there were 154,800 income units who stated that they were registered on a waiting list for rental housing from a State or Territory housing authority.

Across Australia, four per cent of all renting income units were on public housing waiting lists. In South Australia, this proportion was nine per cent, while in the Australian Capital Territory it was six per cent.

However, a somewhat different picture emerges if the number of income units who were on a public housing waiting list is expressed as a ratio of the number of current public housing tenants in each State and Territory. This gives some indication of the demand for and supply of public housing. In Victoria in April 1994, for every 100 income units currently renting public housing, there were an additional 60 income units on the waiting lists. In Queensland, this ratio was 48. The lowest ratios were 18, recorded in each of Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Across

Australia, for every 100 income units renting publicly, there were an additional 41 renting income units waiting to rent a dwelling from a public housing authority.

Of the 154,800 income units currently on a public housing waiting list, 18,100 or 12 per cent were already renting a housing authority dwelling. Of the remainder, 42 per cent were currently renting from a real estate agent and a further 28 per cent were renting from a private landlord, not living in the same household.

**TABLE 11 INCOME UNITS(a): SUMMARY CHARACTERISTICS**

Summary characteristics	Proportion of total (%)
Type of income unit	
Couple only	12.7
Couple with dependants	10.2
One parent	20.6
One person	56.5
Age group of reference person	
15 to 24 years	*3.8
25 to 34 years	14.1
35 to 44 years	16
45 to 54 years	14.5
55 to 64 years	14.6
65 years and over	36.9
Gross weekly income quintiles	
Less than \$178	29.5
\$178 to \$288	40
\$289 to \$415	17
\$416 to \$592	7.4
More than \$592	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	'000
Number of income units	100.2

(a) Includes income units who have always rented from a State or Territory housing authority.

\* Relative standard error of 25 per cent or more.

**TABLE 12 INCOME UNITS(a): STATE AND TERRITORY DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME UNITS WHO WERE REGISTERED ON PUBLIC WAITING LISTS**

State/Territory	Number ('000)	Proportion of all renting income units (%)	Number on waiting list per 100 public tenants
New South Wales	48.6	3.8	33.8
Victoria	33.7	3.9	59.8
Queensland	25.2	3.6	48.4
South Australia	26.1	9	43.4
Western Australia	13.1	4	48.2
Tasmania	*2.3	*2.8	*18.4
Northern Territory	*1.8	*5.2	*17.6
Australian Capital Territory	*3.9	*5.9	*29.5
<b>Australia</b>	<b>154.8</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>41.2</b>

(a) Includes income units who stated that they were on a State or Territory housing authority waiting list.

\* Relative standard error of 25 per cent or more.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

While the Renters in Australia publication provides an insight into the rental dwelling market and the stock of rental housing, it does not examine the rental housing supply mechanism. Data relating to the supply of private rental housing is provided by another ABS survey, namely Investors in Rental Dwellings. This survey was conducted in July 1993 and the results are

available in Investors in Rental Dwellings, Australian (cat. no.8711.0).

---

This page last updated 23 December 2009

© Commonwealth of Australia

All data and other material produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) constitutes Commonwealth copyright administered by the ABS. The ABS reserves the right to set out the terms and conditions for the use of such material. Unless otherwise noted, all material on this website – except the ABS logo, the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, and any material protected by a trade mark – is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Australia licence